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ABSTRACT

The primary emphasis of this monograph is upon the importance of spritual strength and commitment on the part of teachers in Catholic schools. It is within this context that the daily tasks, problems, and responsibilities of the teacher are discussed. The personal relationships of all individuals involved with teaching children are considered in the light of shared goals and aspirations. A discussion of the professional qualities and competencies of the teacher leads to a delineation of personnel practices and policies in Catholic schools. A bibliography and an annotated list of suggested readings are included. (JD)

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NCEA Keynote Series No. 8

THE TEACHER IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Sister Francis Raftery, SC

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Sister Francis Raftery, SC

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PREFACE

The NCEA Keynote Series is made possible by a grant from the Michael J. McGivney Fund. This fund for new initiatives in Catholic education came through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus under the leadership of Virgil C. Dechant, Supreme Knight.

The Reverend Russell M. Bleich, Superintendent of Education in the Diocese of Dubuque, Iowa, made the original suggestion for preservice and inservice materials for teachers. Thanks are due the authors of this series and to the staff of the Education Office of the Archdiocese of Dubuque for the practical application section of each booklet.

Special thanks go to Ms. Eileen Torpey, the major editor of the series. The editorial committee consists of the Reverend J. Stephen O'Brien, Executive Director of the Department of Chief Administrators of Catholic Education, Sister Carleen Reck, Executive Director of the Elementary School Department, and Michael J. Guerra, the Executive Director of the Secondary School Department.

1. THE CHURCH AND THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

In his book, *On Beyond Zebra*, Dr. Seuss introduces the study of a familiar topic, *the alphabet*, with these words:

"In the places I go there are things that I see
That I *never* could spell if I stopped with the Z.
I'm telling you this 'cause you're one of my friends.
My alphabet starts where your alphabet ends.
. . . You'll be sure of surprises where there is to be found
Once you go beyond Z and start poking around!"[1]

Truly, this writer begins the presentation of a work on the teacher in the spirit of Seuss—"to go beyond zebra and start poking around." The role of *teacher* in the Catholic school is one of trust, reverence, and promise. The study of Catholic education leads one to the writings of the church on the role of teachers. "Let teachers recognize that the Catholic School depends on them almost entirely for the accomplishments of its goals and purposes."[2]

"Much attention has been directed in the 80's to the spiritual formation and ecclesial literacy of the teachers involved in Catholic Education."[3] The 80's is the "time between eras." Naisbitt explains, "We are living in the time of the parenthesis, the time between eras. It is as though we have bracketed off the present from both the past and the future, for we are neither here nor there. . . Those of us who are willing to handle the ambiguity of this in-between period and to anticipate the new era will be a quantum leap ahead of those who hold onto the past. The time of the parenthesis is a time of change and questioning."[4] It is a "time of parenthesis" for all of those involved in Catholic education.

The issue we face is simply stated in an historical context

in a program of spirituality for teachers, presented by Wojcicki and Convey. "Just as the Sister formation movement of the 1950's served as a professional corrective to the education of Catholic School Teachers of the 1940's, the Teacher formation thrust of the 1980's promises to provide a Spiritual dimension and a Church-centered emphasis that were not highly evident in the 1970's."[5] It is in this context that we open the end of the parenthesis and move into the exploration of the role of the teacher in the Catholic school at the turn of this century.

During these last few years, a new understanding of the need to garner support for teachers in our Catholic school has emerged on a variety of levels in the church community. The 1983 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) study of *The Catholic Secondary Schools* indicates that "About one-half of full-time teachers have been on staff in the representative schools for five years or less. While some influx of new teachers brings new energy and new perspectives, the degree of turnover may ultimately tax the schools' ability to build the sense of Community and common purpose that has been a hallmark of Catholic education."[6] In the fall of 1984, at a meeting of the superintendents of all the diocesan offices in the state of New Jersey, the same concern was voiced by the directors of education from the religious communities staffing the schools throughout the state. These directors of education pledged to work together in the study of a two-fold concern:

(a) Support for the continued emphasis on teacher formation and preparation for teaching in the "Faith Communities" of the Catholic schools.

(b) Support for sound fiscal planning that will provide just salaries for the teacher in the Catholic school.[7]

It is evident that "community" is at the heart of Christian education not simply as a concept to be taught but as a reality to be lived. "Through education, men (and women) must be moved to build a community in all areas of life; they can do this best if they have learned the meaning of community by experiencing it. Formed by this experience, they are better able to build community in their families, their places of work, their neighborhoods, their nation, their

world."[8] The realities of the 80's press the leaders in Catholic education to move toward the goal described so powerfully in the document just cited. The 80's is a period of sensing and studying the critical role of the teacher in the process of Catholic education and studying those dilemmas that threaten the formation of "faith communities" in our schools. The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education notes in its 1977 document, "By their witness and their behavior Teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic Schools. It is, therefore, indispensable to ensure their continuing formation through some form of suitable pastoral provision. This must aim to animate them as witnesses of Christ in the classroom and tackle the problems of their particular apostolate, especially regarding a Christian vision of the world and of education, problems also connected with the art of teaching in accordance with the principles of the Gospel. A huge field is thus opened up for national and international organizations which bring together Catholic Teachers and educational institutions at all levels."[9]

This paper will discuss those variables that underscore the principle listed in Gravissimum Educationis, #8, "Let teachers recognize that the Catholic School depends on them almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and purposes."[10] Secondly, the paper will explore those variables that permeate the meaning of "witness" and true commitment to continuing service in the "faith community" of the Catholic school.

Schools are people. Catholic schools must seek to engage the services of loving and committed people. Such service is the heartbeat of the faith life that energizes the teachers.

2. THE TEACHER: DISTINCTIVE EXPECTATIONS FOR NECESSARY QUALITIES AND COMPETENCIES

"But we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep."—These haunting words of Robert Frost urge the teacher in the Catholic school to examine closely those distinctive qualities that make his or her professional "promises" unique. When a teacher agrees by contract "to teach" in a Catholic school, a bond or commitment is made. This bond or "promise" must be carefully noted in the contract he or she signs. The "promises to keep" are at the heart of the contract. Professional commitments and expectations are clearly stated, however, a pledge to grow as Christian and as educator is the daily breath of contract. Teaching in a Catholic school is not a job, but a way of life—a commitment.

Often, the implications of the contract are developed in a sound orientation process by the local school or the diocesan office. The full scope of such a unique commitment is lived out in Christian service as the administrator, teachers, and new teachers develop together. To explore the commitment more fully, this section focuses on faith and personal/relational qualities.

Faith Qualities and Competencies

According to *The Catholic School*, "The achievement of the specific aim of the Catholic school depends not so much on subject matter or methodology as on the people who work there. The extent to which the Christian message is transmitted through education depends

to a great extent on the teachers. The integration of culture and faith is mediated by the other integration of faith and life in the person of the teacher. The nobility of the task to which the teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behavior. That is what made the difference between a school whose education is permeated by the Christian Spirit and one in which religion is only regarded as an academic subject like any other."[12]

We live in a period when teachers are seriously seeking to discover and rediscover the sources of strength and vitality that enable them to be productive and loving professionals in the service of God and their students. The present day interest in renewal programs for faculties attest to these hopes and desires. Given the challenges and demands of the educational ministry, such renewal is imperative.

The term, "ministry" is one that heightens the focus of the nature of the commitment to education. "Ministry," Nouwen explains, "is not just a way of relating to people."[13] In this case, ministry is not just a way of teaching people. Nouwen continues, "The basics of ministry are to make visible to others that presence of God in your life."[14]

Teachers search for ways to sustain a spirit of hope, purpose and perseverance in making God present in their lives. The "burned out" feeling is nonproductive in the faith community. One is faced with the question daily, "How can I nourish a faith-filled vision that is so necessary for the ministry of education?" This question is asked by teachers and administrators alike. The demands of our times and the daily challenge of reaching students adds a spirit of urgency to the question.

The focus of this question sends the teacher to seek some deeper inner resources to nourish and sustain the ministry of teaching. Teachers will often share with this writer, after an inservice session, a yearning, a searching, a strong desire for a more God-centered life. Such openness only happens when the climate of the school community is permeated with trust, respect, and love of the members for one another.

There are, of course, no instant nourishment programs.

Dedicated educators in the Catholic community have made serious attempts to design opportunities for teachers to explore such issues. (The 1982 publication from the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development by Father Ted Wojcicki and Brother Kevin Convey is an excellent resource for teachers and faculty members.[15])

The entire ministry of the teacher must be seen in the context of faith. Teaching at its most fundamental level consists in sharing one's faith with another person. Every day in the classrooms across the nation, the teacher sees the unfolding of God's plan and the mystery of God's love in the students assembled. The term "instrument" aptly describes our position in this faith-filled process of teaching. Often, as faculties assemble to "look back" on the events of the school year, they see a design in the events that was not clear at first glance. In the words of the poet, "To know a thing, one must look at that thing long."[16]

Teachers, upon reflection, see that so much of our ministry is spent in helping others to penetrate the mystery of God's love in their lives just as we seek to penetrate this mystery in our own lives. Frequently, the daily crush of life draws this miracle from our focus. Nouwen writes, "To be a minister, you have to let your own struggle become a source for others. To lay down your life for others means realizing that your faith, your pain, wounds and struggles are not just annoying things—and your joys, hopes and successes are not just pleasant things. They are for others."[17]

As teachers, we need to grow in our awareness and appreciation of a loving God at work in our lives. The teacher as "instrument" gives a faith-filled perspective to our professional life. The prayer of Saint Francis is truly the prayer of the classroom teacher.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hadtred let me sow love;
Where there is injury; pardon;
Where there is doubt; faith'
Where there is despair; hope;
Where there is darkness; light
And where there is sadness; joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

St. Francis of Assisi

The searching and yearning for a full understanding of the power and presence of God in our lives and the lives of our students is a profound starting point for growth. Teachers who attend to and nourish this desire are on the way to a life of faith and wonder. Keeping alive a sense of wonder is a favorite theme of Heschel: "The beginning of our happiness lies in the understanding that life without wonder is not worth living. What we lack is not a will to believe but a will to wonder."[18] The dailiness of classroom teaching is the workshop for exercises in wondering!

As teachers share deeply in the lives of others, the following questions surface, "Who is God to me? What about the questions of love and life in my heart? What is the role of prayer in my life?" Nouwen reminds us, "A Christian minister will never be able to minister, if it is not his/her own most personal faith and insight into life that forms the core of his(her) pastoral works."[19]

Healy notes, "Prayer helps us to grow in our awareness of God's presence and His unique call to each of us. It invites God more fully into our lives and gives Him the opportunity to speak to us while at the same time allowing us to adopt a more listening and responsive attitude to His gentle initiative and movements both within us and around us. . . Prayer involves a stance of true humility and simplicity before God."[20] It is evident to the seasoned minister in the Catholic school that prayer is a necessary means for deepening our relationship with Christ. As the teacher shares this love of Christ with others, our teaching becomes an instrument through which his love can work with energy and dynamism.

Finally, as teachers in Catholic schools, we must believe

that God is with us as we carry on the mission of education. Often in the press of the "everydayness" of our teaching, we face discouragement or we see it in the faces of our colleagues. To read this expression in our own lives or the lives of others is important. The air of discouragement fills us with a sense of powerlessness without the belief that this is God's work. "Fear not," "Do Not Be Afraid" (Luke 1:31, 2:10-11)—the words of the scriptures must fill teachers with the faith that they are involved in the great work of bringing the "good news" to others. Daily, teachers are called to a continual life of renewal as they focus on the "good news" in their own lives and bring it to life in the minds and hearts of their students.

Personal and Relational Qualities and Competencies

A teacher's professional life is often measured in terms of years of service. It is evident in our Catholic schools across the nation that many have given 30, 40 and 50+ years of faithful service in the ministry of education. Each year of service is filled with a reflection of students, parents and peak moments of time in the classroom. As years move on, students also are left with reflections of teachers, administrators, friends and peak moments in the classroom. What will the teacher remember? What will the student remember? To probe this "remembering" further, the writer asked a number of teachers to reflect on their days in school. The reflections might be placed in two categories, the personal qualities of some former teachers and those relational aspects of the teaching/learning process.

Who is this person we call teacher? There is no substitute for teachers who live an authentic professional life in the Catholic school. They know it, and students past and present know it. All of the innovative techniques and microcomputers in the world will not substitute for the authentic teacher in the classroom.

Teaching is the process of communicating with en-

thusiasm, a love of life, a love of learning, a love of the disciplines we teach, and love for the promise found in those we teach. The authentic teacher is in love with life in the full sense of that word. This love is communicated to the students in the very way he/she speaks and relates in the classroom each day. Teaching, by its very nature, is an interactive process. It is a paradox to find the teacher who loves to teach, but is annoyed by the very humanness of the students. At the very heart of teaching is the process of forming relationships—a gift and a challenge.

In a monograph prepared by the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education (CACE), the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) and the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), the relational and personal qualities of Catholic school teachers are listed very clearly.

a. Relational Qualities: "The effective Catholic school educator relates well with students, parents and colleagues and works collaboratively with others in a variety of situations." More specifically, she/he
   - demonstrates a commitment to life-long development and achievement of satisfying relationships; witnesses to a vital personhood that is alive and growing;
   - recognizes and believes in the potential of others and communicates this belief; views others in a positive way—sees possibilities as well as problems;
   - relates in a respectful manner; assists students to develop a sense of self-worth and responsibility as a Christian, helping them to make decisions and to solve problems from a Christian perspective;
   - listens perceptively to students' concerns and communicates genuine love, warmth and respect while challenging them to become their best selves;
   - recognizes, respects and encourages parents in carrying out their role as significant educators of their children; views parents as partners in the teaching-learning process;
   - maintains a mutual respect for alternative points of view; is sensitive and respectful to value differences, especially regarding individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds;

- acknowledges and appreciates the abilities and contributions of others; cooperates rather than competes and willingly shares ideas, talents and resources.[21]
- acknowledges and appreciates the abilities and contributions of others; cooperates rather than competes and willingly shares ideas, talents and resources.[21]

b. Personal Characteristics: The effective Catholic school educator

- is committed to personal, professional and spiritual growth for self and others; views self as an ongoing learner;
- demonstrates understanding and acceptance of the philosophical assumptions and values which underlie the school's Christian approach to education;
- is committed to the stability and long-range continuity of Catholic education in general and of own Catholic school in particular;
- is accountable and accepts professional evaluation of own performance; reflects on own performance for purposes of self-improvement;
- abides by the legal responsibilities and professional standards of the teaching profession.[22]

In the teaching/learning process, the teacher and student are interactive. Teachers must be capable of forming relationships. It is clear, the most important educational experiences still take place is what is essentially a human relationship.

Teachers who are confident in forming relationships with students are really effective teachers. Those who are "afraid" of their students are unable to form relationships and the teaching/learning process is ineffective. Often, new teachers fear their students, while experienced teachers mask the fear in a dictatorial climate. Such fear stems from a feeling of newness, a fear of feeling, and a fear of being open to rejection. As new teachers grow confident in their teaching, the fear dissipates and positive relationships are formed. Experienced teachers who do not face the fear are saddened ministers for their ineffectiveness is overwhelming.

Nouwen notes, "The ministry of teaching has never

limited itself, therefore, to the teaching of religion. Education is not primarily ministry because of the nature of the educational process itself. Perhaps, we have paid too much attention to the content of teaching without realizing that the teaching relationship is the most important factor in the ministry of teaching."[23]

Relationships exist on many levels in the school community. The relationship of teachers to principals, teacher and other teachers, teachers and student, etc. These relationships form the basis for a positive school community and hence, should be explored.

Teacher and Principal Relationships

Lieberman indicates, "The relationship between teacher and principal may be a more dominant feature in school life than the larger social issues in the newspapers and the recent research done on the process of school changes (Meyer, 1975; Dial and Celotti, 1977; Brazill, 1979; Hall and others, 1980). The principal makes known what is important and often sets the climate. There is no doubt that morale and the teachers' sense of professionalism has a great deal to do with the principal's relationship with the faculty.[24] The relationship with the principal may be tenuous or, as in the case of the role of principal as described by Egan, may be one of pledged support "to assist the teacher to continue to grow as a Christian person and educator."[25]

Teachers and principals often have relationships that are more vital—teachers with students and parents and principals with parents, students, and other principals. The concept of "faith community" attempts to call teachers and principals to the "mission" as partners in proclaiming the "good news." Principals and teachers need each other. The effective school depends on the positive nature of this relationship.[26]

Teachers and Other Teachers' Relationships

In some Catholic schools, teachers come to minister together and form close relationships outside of school. In others, teachers relate to each other only formally. Finally, in others, the "cold war" of mutual coexistence may be the climate for the lack of relationships. Many teachers will speak with great energy of the positive relationships formed in the school community. Such comments give testimony that "Christian fellowship grows in the personal relationships of friendship, trust, and love infused with a vision of men and women as Children of God redeemed by Christ."[27]

Without such "fellowship," the climate is noticeable to the most casual observer. Something is missing—a sorry plight in the contemporary church scene. We are called as teachers in a Catholic school to assemble as a community of believers to "share the story and propose the Vision."[28]

Groome writes, "Because our educating is carried out on behalf of the Christian Community, we are accountable for how faithfully we remember the story and how well we dispose people to relive and reclaim it in their lives."[29]

As teachers, we accept the responsibility to call one another to greatness in the ministry of education.

Teacher and Parent Relationships

Never before in the history of the Catholic school has the relationship between parent and teacher been more critical. Teaching in a Catholic school means working in partnership with parents and those "significant others" in the broader community. "Parents make a difference in the quality of the school. Studies indicate that children's academic achievement is higher when parents are associated with the schooling process on a partnership basis."[30]

Many parents look to the school as a beacon of hope for stabilizing family life. The teacher must recognize and respect the primary roles of parents in the education of their

children. However, the teacher also must be alert to create a climate of mutual trust and support in order that parents will feel a spirit of Christian hospitality when they approach the school for help. Listening is an art that must be developed and nurtured by Christian compassion. Teachers are called to provide a full and real presence for the parents of their students. Labeling and judging students are not the role of the teacher in the Catholic school. A contemporary poster seen on the wall in the education department of a Catholic college signals this caution to preservice teachers, "Label Jars and Not People!"

The "brokenness of spirit," evidenced by parents and children, urge teachers to greatness of heart and compassion. Teachers are called to meet the people of God and share their lives. Delaney, Richards and Straithe, in *A Study of the Single Parent Child in the Catholic School,* note, "By acceptance of home life differences, sustained caring and structured continuity, teachers can contribute significantly to the satisfactory adjustment of the child of divorce."[31] Such caring and structured continuity is equally important in teacher relationships with parents. Teachers and principals must be sensitive to the ways in which stress impacts on both parents and students.

In the Ladue Evaluation and Salary Program, a document that delineates the criteria for teacher effectiveness, the section on contracts with parents may be worthy of reflection:

> The teacher has a responsibility to develop and support two-way communication between himself or herself and those members of the community who have an interest in the school.
>
> a. The teacher devotes time and effort to the promotion of the school's philosophy and program, thereby contributing to his or her effectiveness with parents, patrons, and the community at large.
> b. The teacher seeks opportunities to communicate with parents and other interested parties both orally and in writing.
> c. The teacher utilizes parent and community resources to broaden the school program.[32]

In its presentation, "Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith," the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education states: "...laity should participate authentically in the responsibility for the school; this assumes that they have the ability that is needed in all areas, and are sincerely committed to the educational objectives which characterize a Catholic school. And the school should use every means possible to encourage this kind of commitment; without it, the objectives of the school can never be fully realized."[33] This is a great challenge for all teachers. Relationships with parents are essential for the future of students and the future of the school. Such relationships are not voluntary but integral to the teaching/learning process.

Teacher and Student Relationships

"Children are strangers we have to get to know. They have their own style, their own rhythm, and their own capacities for good and evil...Children carry a promise with them, a hidden treasure that has to be led into the open through education in a hospitable home (classroom)."[34] The children who assemble in the Catholic school are often "strangers whom we (teachers) have yet to know." This is the challenge of teaching, at once exhilarating and exhausting.

Some children are open, free and eager to form relationships with their teachers. Others have been bruised by risking relationships and failing. These children, who have been hurt, enter into the teaching/learning process with great fear. These children of fear need to share the glad tidings of the Angel, "Be not afraid" (Luke 2:10).

"Teaching asks first of all the creation of a space where students and teachers can enter into fearless communication with each other."[35]

Groome writes, "Our students are brother/sister pilgrims in time with us. All of them have their own unique history (story) and destiny (vision). In presuming to be educators with them, we are taking on a sacred trust, a trust that is betrayed when we deny who they have been or decide who they should be."[36]

He continues, "Our students are subjects, not objects. . . Our students are to be treated as subjects, not from any particular magnanimity of ours or merit of theirs, but because all people are created in the same image and likeness of God. . . As teachers, we have the right to speak our own words, but also an obligation to hear theirs."[37] These thoughts of Groome deserve profound reflection.

It is evident that the relationship between teacher and student is one of sacred trust. The teacher views students "with a reverence characterized by compassion and high expectations."[38] The reality is that as teacher, when we accept our students with their gifts and limitations, we develop our own full potential as person and learner. Those characteristics that permeate our interaction with students are a deep respect for the dignity of person present in each child, a deep respect for the uniqueness of the child as a person and learner, and finally, a profound reverence for the future of these children as participants with us in building the kingdom.

3. THE TEACHER: PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES AND COMPETENCIES

Every student in the Catholic school has the right to meet the truly educated person with the title, teacher. Fisher outlines carefully the four characteristics or qualities of the educated person:

"The educated man (woman) is one who:

- vibrates in the presence of quality
- keeps growing in spirit
- works out his (her) destiny with a sense of dedication
- develops a poetic vision that keeps expanding."[39]

With minor adjustments, one might easily transpose this list of characteristics into the qualities for the competent teacher. The creative dimension of teacher is underscored in the life-filled words of Fisher. Teachers must be constant learners who search for quality and recognize giftedness when they are in its presence. Mediocrity will not be tolerated by the educated person. The vibration in the "presence of quality" resonates and helps the teacher continue to "grow in spirit." The difference between the dedicated teacher and the nondedicated is apparent—even to the youngest child. Such a teacher "works out his (her) destiny with a zest and purpose." The child breathes in this air of life and develops with the teacher "a poetic vision that keeps expanding." These characteristics might well form the basis for inservice reflection and discussion.

In the bulletin, "The Pre-Service Formation of Teachers for Catholic Schools," the professional qualities of the teacher are listed as follows:

"The effective Catholic School educator integrates religious beliefs with secular knowledge and uses educational approaches based on current research." In more specific terms, these qualities can be grouped in the following three

categories:

- Personal Characteristics: as outlined on page 19.
- Cognitive Abilities:
  - demonstrates understanding of the broad vision needed to advance the ministry of the church through the unique processes of Catholic education;
  - demonstrates understanding of the purpose and ministry of the church in education and recognizes the distinctive mission and role played by Catholic schools, both in the Catholic community and American society in general;
  - demonstrates religious literacy and is especially knowledgeable about religion in general and the Catholic religion in particular (including the major statements of the church regarding one's own professional area of expertise);
  - demonstrates understanding of the contemporary social teaching of the church and the importance of developing Christians with the perspective and desire for service (including a personal commitment to action for justice, mercy and peace);
  - demonstrates understanding of how young people develop religiously and the role that teachers play in this development.
- Facilitation Skills:
  - motivates others through own enthusiasm and commitment for growth in the Christian life; models the abilities and attitudes that students are expected to learn;
  - guides student learning of concepts, abilities and attitudes needed to recognize and confront problems of injustice in our pluralistic society;
  - provides learning experiences enabling students to relate Christian principles and values to life situations;
  - fosters the service consciousness of students by encouraging experiential learning activities that permit students to give witness to Christian justice and love;
  - stimulates analysis and critical thinking through effective questioning skills; interacts dynamically with students, challenging them to higher levels of cognitive awareness;

- views each learner as an individual and demonstrates awareness of the individual progress of each learner toward the development of a Christian perspective;
- demonstrates understanding of own professional limitations and makes appropriate referrals for the benefit of the student;
- is creative and resourceful in using appropriate school and community resources to facilitate optimal learning for all students.[40]

Love of Life

Teaching is the process of communicating with enthusiasm a love of life, a love of the discipline we teach, and a love of the students we teach. The quality of enthusiasm is the common denominator for the effective teacher. This enthusiasm is translated in many ways on a daily basis in the classroom. It may be centered in a sensitivity to the morale of the student body, a presence at a time of family need, a rigorous study preparation for an SAT exam, etc. There are countless ways. The dictionary defines enthusiasm as "ardent zeal for a person or a course."[41] Truly, the effective teacher possesses this quality. Peters and Waterman devote a chapter in their book to the concept of the "champion or zealot." The transferability of these concepts to the Catholic school teacher is remarkable. "Fired up Champions—The scarce people who have the know-how, energy, going, and staying power to get things done."[42]

The characteristic of enthusiasm is hard to measure, yet when it's absent, most observable. Effective teachers who possess this quality are alert to the potential of each moment that presents itself in the teaching/learning process. Clements encourages administrators when interviewing teachers to "look for a person with a smile, some 'bounce' to his or her personality, and apparent zest for life, and a love of children. Without these attributes, all the content knowledge and maturity in the world won't effectively reach students." The author continues, "If you don't go into your class—most days—glad you are alive, smiling, happy to be

doing your thing with children, excited by your teaching, you had better get yourself together. You are missing a great deal in life, and you should probably be replaced."[43]

Finally, another way to look at this quality of enthusiasm and love of life is on the reverse side. Noneffective teachers are harassed, disturbed, unsure, with no interest or enthusiasm. Lack of spirit is contagious. Often students and their parents are blamed, "This used to be a good school!" A sad, demoralized teacher responds in this fashion. The Catholic school teacher reveals the Christian message of the good news "not only by word but by every gesture of their behavior."[44]

Love of the Discipline

The second part of the definition of teaching encompasses a love of the discipline taught. Teachers who love the content they teach, who are competent in the discipline, and are ingenious in using opportunities for teaching are a treasure. Hunter's research into teaching as a science divides the teaching powers into measurable component parts. She sees teaching as "the constant stream of professional decisions that affects the probability of learning: decisions are made and implemented before, during, and after interaction with the students."[45] This concept of teaching expands competence in the content area to the quality of teacher as decision-maker.

Barnes, in his research, examines a series of professional qualities that were reported as effective in evaluating the teacher.[46] These qualities or teacher behavior characteristics include the following:

1. Learning environment (warm and supportive)
2. Classroom management (well organized)
3. Classroom instruction (work oriented)
4. Productive use of time (brisk pacing)
5. Specific behaviors include:
   a. Gaining students' attention
   b. Clear presentation
   c. Practice of new skills
   d. Monitoring

e. Providing feedback
f. Assigning individual work
g. Evaluating student responses.[47]

Students are quick to assess the effective teacher. The following listing may be helpful in identifying those qualities of professionalism that are measurable.

1. Effective teachers have the ability to remain self-controlled in the midst of conflicting demands.
2. Effective teachers are habitually quiet, poised, and courteous in relationships with children.
3. Effective teachers are constructive and encouraging in comments and manner.
4. Effective teachers are enthusiastic about pupils and teaching.
5. Effective teachers possess sufficient self-restraint to allow students to work through their own problems.
6. Effective teachers are careful in planning with students and in guiding them to successful completion of understanding.
7. Effective teachers are skillful in directing students to evaluate their own work.
8. Effective teachers are interested in students as persons.[48]

Wojcicki and Convey include the following excerpt from the *San Francisco Chronicle* in their "Program of Spirituality" as a response to the inquiry, "Who is the good teacher?"

> "Now and then we meet persons who have a certain aura. They radiate an atmosphere which leaves us singularly free from pressure. They are glad to express their opinions but we feel no compulsion to agree. We feel emancipated and refreshed. And these people are not cold or aloof. It is simply that they have such emotional solidity that they want nothing from us but that we can freely give. A therapeutic atmosphere is set up in which others feel safe, can be themselves, can flourish and grow. These fortunate individuals have the power to convey a most extraordinary gift."[49]

The teacher's professional competence, personal and relational qualities, and faith qualities are experienced by the students as an integration of learning and living.

Organizational and Management Qualities

Teaching is the process of communicating enthusiasm while we teach. Teachers very often communicate exhaustion, frayed nerves, and a TGIF attitude. We are communicators of the "good news"! The best organized classroom will not survive an unenthusiastic attitude. For to love the process of organizing and managing, yet dislike the students is to manage in vain. The critical person involved in setting the "people climate" is the teacher. To explore the topic of classroom management without reflecting on the dynamics of teaching is to miss the very life of organization and management.

Classroom management has three guideposts for organization. The following questions may focus the considerations:

1. Is there anything in my classroom that violates dignity of person? (The teacher, tone of voice, seating arrangements, schedules, mode of discipline, etc.)
2. Is there anything in my classroom that violates uniqueness of the student as person and learner? (Grouping, grades, evaluative techniques, etc.)
3. Is there anything in my classroom that diminishes my belief in the future power of these students? (Labeling, burned-out attitudes, stereotyping, etc.)

These questions provide a lifetime of meditative points. Catholic educators could offer a model for the nation by organizing instruction around the three basic principles contained in the questions above.

For the purpose of specificity, the teacher is asked to examine the organization of time, space, and materials as a self-reflection.

Time

Time is the most precious commodity of teachers. We never seem to have enough to share with our students. Most teachers are always in a hurry and rarely able to finish all they have planned. Perhaps, it might be helpful to look at the way we use time.

1. Planning Time—There is no way to teach unless we plan. As teachers begin to look at next year in light of the errors of this year, a few suggestions are given:

   A large calendar with the 10 months of the school year is a useful planning aid. In September, the teacher can cross off all the holidays, assembly times, parish events, etc. Then, the teacher can take the concept continuum or school skill continuum, and begin to plan each discipline. There is no mystery about how much time we will have next year—approximately 180 days. The teacher should try to do this plotting for each subject area. Rarely do we find teachers planning for long range accomplishments. Such planning will avoid the end of the year rush! Covering the book should not be used as the plan of action. Deleting extraneous material in the beginning of the school year will insure time to cover important concepts. This is true at the elementary and secondary levels.
2. Time for Gathering Instructional Materials—In light of the plan of action determined for the school year, resources are organized. Often teachers are unaware of the instructional materials available in the school, the library, and the community. With plan in hand before the school year, resources can be examined and requested. Orientation days might include searching for resources as part of the day. (N.B. No hoarders are permitted on the faculty and all closets are opened during the search for resources.)
3. Time for Diagnostic Evaluation—It is essential in planning for next year to consider the identification of diagnostic tools and materials to assist in individualizing instruction. Diagnostic techniques are so necessary in identifying "where the students are." Inservice sessions should be provided for faculties in this very critical area. Often at the junior high and secondary levels, teachers begin to teach and omit the necessary steps of diagnosing the needs of students. Nothing should be assumed. The basis for each area of the discipline must be in place before new areas are explored. Frequently, a failed unit test is the first indication to the teacher that the basics

were missing.

4. Teaching/Planning Time—Only after steps 1, 2 and 3 have been completed are we ready to teach. This is the heart of the process. Planning for each day sharpens the yearly focus. Departmental organization can "free" teachers with time to plan. Many administrators have organized their "specials," with an eye toward freeing grade level teachers for planning and evaluation. Teachers must have time to chat together and share perceptions about the most important people in the educational process—the students. Secondary teachers need to meet as a team of instructors to plan for those students who may be failing. Students rarely fail in one subject. The student knows the composite of the failures and the instructors of that student may be unaware of the total picture. Administrators and teachers must attend to organizing time to meet to share insights that would benefit students in difficulty.

Space and Materials

The actual physical environment for the room is a prime target for organization. The following points may be helpful:

1. Routines—In many classrooms there is a rhythm and a movement which indicates students are "free" within a structure. New teachers must establish set routines for attendance, cafeteria, materials, etc. Even the daily event of prayer needs to be examined. Routinizing this classroom experience of the gathered young Christians can be numbing. However, we need to designate a space, time, and expected climate to "free the students" to pray.
2. Space for Grouping—The rule of thumb for organizing the classroom is that no one way is the best. We have found that large group instruction is very effective for introductory work, film sharing, project sharing, etc. Small groups are more helpful in skill instruction and need space to work without disrupting the others. Great care should be taken to provide alternate settings for instruction.

Often bookcases, portable dividers or blackboards can serve as silent dividers of workcenters. One teacher found a small table with a little lamp formed the perfect spot for one student who needed to work alone. When the light was on, privacy was the rule! Mobility of desks is a must for alternating space for instructional needs. For junior high and secondary students, close attention also must be given to the use of space. This writer has observed the similarity of space use at the junior high, secondary and collegiate levels. Cemetery rows are the usual pattern. Variety in the use of space is the key to effective instruction. Small groups and individualized instructional experiences must be part of the daily routine.

3. Mapping Space and Materials—Work contracts are a mode of organizing time and space. Great care is taken by the teacher to develop the choices on the contract. The choices are then placed in a variety of settings within the classroom in learning center format. (Please refer to Charles F. Reasoner's work in this area. Concrete examples of sample contracts are given for your consideration in this superior work.) For older students and students at the senior high level, computerized software packages provide individualized instruction with tailor-made pacing. Lap paks, a popular notion from the 60's, still hold a possibility for individualized and small group work.
4. Learning Centers—Great attention has been given to the establishment of spaces for learning centers. In these centers, students have a teacher-prepared task clearly delineated. The student completes the task and after teacher approval, moves to the next center. The work contract mentioned above will serve as a good line of accountability for the teacher and student computer centers which are the learning centers of the 80's.
5. Space for Read-Aloud Center—The primary teacher should consider a read-aloud center. Training an aide, a mother, a grandparent to read aloud to a small group of children each day, can have a remarkable impact on the reading program. If the children are grouped in threes or fours and cycled through the center, they can ex-

perience the wonderful joys of the best in children's literature and "free" the teacher to work with other groups.

6. Resource Space—In order to highlight materials carefully, teachers must label space(s). Games, models, puzzles, and equipment should be labeled. When the label on the model and a space match, organization is in place. New teachers need to note that all resources are not available to students on the first day of school. The selection and removal of materials are critical to variety in the environment.
7. File Cabinet for Materials—Each teacher will find a file cabinet an indispensable tool for organization. The cabinet can be used to file and organize the students' materials. Each drawer can be labeled and contain a folder for each student in alphabetical order. As they are completed and corrected, papers can be filed by the student. Thus, the teacher is able to accumulate a collection of papers for total analysis and parent conferences.
8. Workbooks and Enrichment Books—So often extra workbooks and enrichment books are available for teachers. It may be helpful to take the workbooks and separate each sheet from the binding. The teacher should organize the sheets, match them to the skill continuum, then file them. These sheets can then be ready for easy access when needed.

The best way to learn skills or organization is to observe those teachers who are organized and deal skillfully and effectively with children on a daily basis. Beginning teachers should not get discouraged. With the love of teaching, the organization and competencies come with renewed attempts in examining time, space and materials.[50]

Commitment to Personal, Professional and Spiritual Growth

In 1982, NCEA published a *Code of Ethics for the Catholic School Teachers.*[51] This code is designed to delineate a set of commitments for the teacher "who is growing in faith, hope and love of Christ."[52] This writer recommends that educators prayerfully reflect on the *Code of Ethics* as a context for personal, professional and spiritual growth. (It is referenced and annotated in the bibliography.)

Schools are given life by the people they house. Schools without students are hollow shells of possibilities. Schools without teachers have no purpose. When teachers and students come together, the teaching/learning process is activated. Teachers are the key resource for effective schools. Recent national studies point out the need for effective teacher preparation and inservice programs. The unique mission of Catholic education is spelled out for Catholic colleges and universities, in collaboration with diocesan offices, to provide opportunities for academic and faith development. Such programs must be central to an ever-renewed school community.

Individual teachers must commit themselves to the responsibility for evaluating their attitudes, philosophies and self-improvement plans. Self-awareness is the basic component for receptivity to inservice education. The pastoral titled, "Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith," urges administrators to extend this self-awareness through sound and systematic inservice. The pastoral notes, "Professionalism is one of the most important characteristics in the identity of every lay Catholic (and religious teacher). The first requirement, then, for a lay teacher (religious teacher) who wishes to live out his or her eccelesial vocation, is the acquisition of solid professional formation. In the case of an educator this includes competency in a wide range of culture, psychologies, and pedagogical areas. However, it is not enough that the initial training be at a good level. This must be maintained and deepened, always bringing it up to date."[53]

"The Catholic educator has a constant need for updating: in personal attitudes, in the content of subjects that are taught, in the pedagogical methods that are used. Recall that the vocation of an educator requires a constant readiness to begin anew and to adapt."[54]

When teachers in the school believe that the Catholic school depends upon them almost entirely for the accomplishments of its goals and purposes, the commitment for growth is unending. Systematic and developmental inservice programs are essential for the Christian formation and growth of the teacher.

Heath, in his research, notes that there are principles of maturation that can be applied to teacher growth:

1. Enhancing symbolization: providing challenge; teaching and reflection upon one's own growth.
2. Furthering multiple perspectives: creating a climate of trust; providing for people to take other roles; expecting people to be responsible for others' growth (mutual obligation).
3. Increasing integration: encouraging active involvement; providing experiential learning; modeling integration of different ways of thinking.
4. Helping stabilize growth: allow person to experience consequences of decisions and acts; appreciate and affirm strength.
5. Make learning autonomous: encourage responsibility for person's own growth; test and apply learning in varied situations; provide test for person's autonomy.

These principles of adult development must underscore inservice program planning for teachers. Too often, the design and implementation of programs has the opposite effect of growth on teachers. Research in the field gives evidence that building collaboration and cooperation involves the provision for people doing things together, talking together and sharing concerns. Over time, this helps build a sense of common mission or in the Christian sense of community, educators pledged to growth. If this writer has learned anything in conducting and designing inservice programs, it is that one must start where teachers are, care about them, and understand the process and climate of

teaching in the 80's. Appreciating that there are a "variety of gifts" is the key to successful staff development.

The scope of renewal and growth is at once individually and communally oriented. As individual teachers, a systematic program of growth is essential. Because we serve as role models for our students in living the life of a Christian, we must ground ourselves in the gospel. Teachers belong to a variety of communities—at home and in a parish that will nourish individual growth as Christians. Reading, prayer, reflection, and service are the familiar rhythms in the life of the renewed person committed to growth.

In the Catholic school, however, the teachers come together to model for the students a faith community in action. Awareness of the influence of others in our lives abounds in the research of developmental psychologist Martin Hollis' *Models of Man*,[56] which presents the plastic man and the autonomous man for the reader's consideration. In discussion of the plastic man, it is clear that people *are* who they are because of the many influences that were brought on them as they matured, e.g., parents, home and school experiences, geographic locations, We are formed by those around us. In the notion of the autonomous man, there is no deterministic influence. The person is the creator of his/her own self-definition. Flanagan in reviewing these growth patterns notes her concept of "the Golden/Mean person."[57] This is the person who is an ethical being, a being who, in a moment of transcendence, can see many possibilities that enable it to project itself toward new meanings, new possibilities.

This study is interesting in balancing renewal programs for individual and community growth in the school. All school communities have "loners" and "joiners." Some teachers will not support or join in new efforts for fear that their individuality will be jeopardized; others will join in anything. Most teachers, however, are in between with some qualities of each. To put this in the context of church, we are called to be the combination of person, balancing individual and communal growth.

The Chief Administrators of Catholic Education (CACE) have worked to develop preservice and inservice programs

of quality for education in Catholic schools. This writer has been renewed by participation in the inservice programs of many dioceses across the nation. It is clear that teachers are searching for ways to improve themselves in order that the community of teachers assembled each day will serve as a "light" to those attending. The models for improvement are available for use on the local level and diocesan level. *Vision and Values*, an NCEA-sponsored approach to evaluating growth and vision, has had a profound impact across the nation. *A Program for Spirituality*,[58] noted earlier in the text, is a systematic and developmental program for teachers as individuals and as members of the faith community in the school.

Some describe teaching as a "lonely profession." The loneliness often comes in the realm of isolation from one's peers. Relations with students are daily. It is clear that teacher/student relationships are central to the teaching/learning process. Frequently, when the community of teachers is not loving and supportive, teacher relations with other teachers may be characterized as remote, oblique and protective. In the Catholic school, with so many engaged in the mission, it is a paradox and tragedy that Christian educators feel separated from the community.

It might be said that identification with and involvement in the efforts of the faith community might help address the national teacher turnover rate cited in the initial findings of the project of NCEA, "Catholic Secondary Schools: Their Impact on Students from Low Income Families."[59] It is naive to think that the chief factor in this turnover rate is salary. Although salary is critical, a sense of belonging is important in addressing this factor.

Commitment, preparation, continual renewal—all of these are essential to the mission of Catholic education; they can be assured only if each school community and individual teacher engage in constant and ongoing evaluation of the needs of the students and the schools' response to those needs. "We have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep."[60]

The Witness Dimension

Witness is the basis of Christian ministry.[61] Through the Christian ministry of teaching, we make visible to our students the presence and meaning of God in our lives. Nouwen continues, "All ministry is a witnessing to one another that God speaks to us in our condition. It helps us to understand that condition, to recognize our needs, and then to see how God's mercy, grace, and love are responding to the needs of our life."[62] The teacher is a very visible witness to the school community on a daily basis. This is what makes the responsibility of teacher in the Catholic school so awesome. Shortly after the beginning of the school year, this writer asked a red-headed five-year-old why he had lost interest in school. "Well, the thing I really hate about it is that it is *every day!*" The everyday dimension of our "witness" is the demanding aspect of the Christian ministry of education. "You are the light of the World. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on a lamp stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men (women), so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

The pastoral documents of the church reiterate the role of teachers as witness. In the pastoral titled, "The Catholic School," it is recorded, "By their witness and their behavior teachers are of first importance in imparting a distinctive character to Catholic Schools." The very "way of life" of the teacher is the daily model for students to view, question, and judge. Teaching, by its very nature, is a public act.

Systematic faithfulness to the way of the gospel in a teacher's life speaks volumes on a daily basis. Watch me, I will show you how this Christian teacher struggles daily to live the Gospel and witness to Christ in my life! The church document titled, "Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith," points out, "The more completely an educator can give concrete witness to the model of the ideal person that is being presented to the students, the more their ideal will be believed and imitated. For it will then be seen

as something reasonable and worthy of being lived, something concrete and realizable. It is in this context that the faith witness of the lay teacher (and religious) becomes especially important."[63]

The role of teacher as witness is on the cutting edge of what outstanding teachers in the Catholic schools are doing and must do to live out the mission and purpose of the school in the context of church. This is nothing new. Teachers in Catholic schools have been striving to do this for years. It is the very reason this writer and many of our teachers are an integral part of the educational ministry today.

Teaching in Catholic schools emphasizes both human development and growth in understanding the role of the gospel in our lives. A holistic approach to teaching blends academic excellence and Christian formation. The "dailiness" of the task of teacher as witness puts our profession in the context of teaching as vocation or calling. It is not a professional task to be "done," but a way of life to be lived. Truly, an awesome task that will bring both students and teachers to the fullness of life.

4. *DISTINCTIVE PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PRACTICES*

The calling of the members to the teaching church is a sacred trust of administrators each academic year. This writer has experienced the network of frantic Labor Day weekend calls from principals desperate for teachers. "I have everything ready but I need a teacher! Do you know anyone?" This is the reality of opening school each year. This dilemma of looking for teachers, interviewing them, signing the contract, orienting them to the mission, etc. is a responsibility filled with challenge and hope.

The search for teachers flows from a series of communications to insure the blending of mission, witness, and service, by effectively combining lay and religious personnel within the Catholic school. The history of Catholic education serves as context for the distinctive personnel policies and practices that surround the search. It might be well to review this historical background as a reference point for meeting contemporary needs.

Background

There have been significant movements in the history of Catholic educational institutions in our country. Religious communities have made and continue to make an impressive mark as the immigrant church gathered in America. At the invitation of bishops, small groups of religious gathered and "did everything," and rarely were lay people involved in these beginnings. However, it is interesting to note in the history of the educational mission, those efforts of pioneer Catholic laity who designed

educational opportunities for the Catholic children entrusted to their care.

As the school system grew, a mix of religious and laity carried on the mission. However, religious communities were responsible, through their corporate commitments, to supply an agreed upon ratio of religious to laity. The certain part of the mix was usually the educational leader.

In the 70's and 80's, a new model for staffing evolved and was nourished by papal documents. Truly, the increased role of the laity became the "sign of the times." The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education published a text titled, "Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith."[64] The document examines the roles of laity in schools—Catholic, public, private, etc. This comprehensive document surfaces professional, vocation, and fiscal issues demanding the prayerful reflection of both religious and lay teachers. The declaration invites educators to expand on its contents and deepen them. It cautions readers not to ignore or minimize the significant accomplishments of Christians who belong to other churches *or* of non-Christians in the fold of education. The richness and uniqueness of the lay vocation within the context of the "People of God" is the vibrant message of Vatican II for educators.

It is evident in sharing concerns with teachers and administrators that the future form of the educational ministry within the parish is of grave concern. This era calls for collaboration between religious and laity with development and commitment to participative leadership. The foundation for the collaborative model was formed by Vatican II and has been reinforced through papal messages since that time.

Attendance of teachers and administrators at the annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention gives evidence of the national scope of the collaborative spirit blowing across the land. One religious community, in designing its 125th celebration, included in its plan a huge Thanksgiving dinner for all the laity who shared the mission of education over the years. Truly, these lay teachers were welcomed as apostles in the mission of education.

Many Catholic schools have viable boards of education that are fine examples of participative leadership. Other

parishes have boards that lack a real understanding of the collaborative model and impede the mission The challenges of such boards often are the burden of the principal of the school. However, in this age of collaboration and commitment, the challenges are truly the shared responsibilities of the teachers. Simple understanding, support, and loyalty are the everyday yeast of the Christian community of education.

This new age carries with it some of the excess baggage of the past. Often a "distance" existed between religious and laity of the schools. This distance was often a misunderstanding of the shared responsibility of all teachers in carrying out the educational mission. "The Church believes that for the integral education of children our young people both religious and lay Catholics are needed in the schools."[65] The document further states, "The educational community of a Catholic school should be trying to become a Christian community: a genuine community of faith. This will not take place . . . unless there is a sharing of the Christian commitment among at least a portion of each of the principal groups that make up the educational community: parents, teachers, students, (administrators and clergy)."[66]

Finally, another barrier to collaboration is fear. It might be said in listening to conversations and questions in educational groups, that some religious and some Catholic laity fear losing control to lay people. What does it mean? What will happen? These are not imaginary fears. When dealt with in a climate of trust, these very questions will lead us to a new sense of the educational ministry in the church and a realization that collaboration between religious and laity can enhance the sense of mission. Decision-making, sharing, and witnessing move to a new level of community life in the school and shape distinctive personnel policies and practices for the Catholic school in the future.

The Pool for Teachers

Each year, the colleges and universities across the nation prepare teachers for the schools. Growing evidence exists for a diminution of the pool. Recent national studies have not portrayed teaching as a "call-

ing." However, there are still a significant number of young people who prepare for the profession. It is from this pool that administrators will attract candidates for the schools. Statistics throughout the country are beginning to reflect critical shortages in many areas of preparation. If the trend of fewer students electing to enter the teaching profession continues, a serious problem will result for all schools.

Catholic colleges and universities possess unique resources to assist Catholic school teachers in combining professional preparation with the spiritual and ministerial dimensions of teacher preparation. Bishops can provide the leadership in "calling" colleges and universities to enter into a collaborative model of teacher preparation. Much has been done in this area of shared responsibility, but we have only touched the tip of the iceberg.

Marketing the unique role of the Catholic school is another area of importance in tapping the pool of potential teachers. Recruitment must be an integral part of planning for new staff. The leadership in Catholic schools must organize around the goal of continuing the mission. A variety of models for staffing the schools must be explored—lay people, religious from one congregation or lay people with intercongregational staffing, or lay people entirely. Leadership must be open to new staffing possibilities, intercongregational relationships, and stronger partnerships as we attract people from the pool. Today is not the time to be shy. Shout from the highest mountain—we need you to join us in the mission of education. Enthusiastic and committed teachers are the best recruiters!

Hiring Practices

In the field of personnel policy, the word "hire" is usually used. To contract one's professional, spiritual, and ministrative gifts for the service of the "People of God" is rarely communicated by the word "hire." However, the process of preparing to sign a contract is rich with promise. There is no more important duty for the administrator than identifying and employing the right teacher.

The identification of the teacher is the critical part of the

process. McBride notes that the principal is looking for "people committed to prayer, regular worship, Church Community, love, kindness and fidelity."[67] This description of the Catholic educator sets the ideal. If we hire a practicing Catholic with these gifts of competence and love, the faith community is enriched. Frequently, the search leads to the "same kind of dedication the Protestants, Jews and Humanists you (we) hire."[68] Those coworkers, who strive to make God the center of their lives and are able to add a spirit of transcendence to the ordinary, are successful prospects.

The interview will provide ample opportunity for the principal and teachers to explore the unique aspects of teaching in a specific Catholic school. It is wise that the final candidates be interviewed by their co-professionals in the school. Teacher insight is sensitive and unique in selecting other teachers. It may be possible for the prospective teacher to *teach* a group of students in the level or grade placement being considered. This provides principals, other teachers, the students, and the candidate an opportunity for careful evaluation. Truly, this future Catholic school teacher is worth an extensive and careful hiring process.

School Personnel

Each diocesan office usually develops a personnel policy and practice manual for administrators to use to facilitate the proper management of the schools in keeping with the goals of Catholic education and state statistics. The policies reflect the efforts to achieve quality academic programs in an atmosphere conducive to learning, growing, and living the gospel.

Teachers and administrators should read the manual and permit the policies and procedures to serve as guidelines for excellence. The roles and responsibilities of teachers should be clearly delineated and usually are. It is in the interpretation of these policies that justice and charity make them distinctive to the profession.

For example, the teacher will prepare for class by conscientiously planning daily activities consistent with long-

range course objectives. In this case the policy is clear. The principal of the school, motivated by justice and charity evaluates the practice of this policy on a regular basis. The Catholic school teacher must know there is no justification for continued "employment" if quality is absent. These are hard words; the action of implementing the policy is harder still. It requires ministers with honesty and integrity to do what they know is correct. Not to do so is a grave injustice to the "People of God."

The consideration of quality of service brings educators face to face with evaluation of teachers. Much research and its influence on practice has been published. It is not the intention of this writer to present the data in this text. However, it is critical that the distinctive aspects of the policy should be noted. The cycle of evaluation in the school is tied to the pursuit of excellence. The spirit of evaluation and the faithfulness of the evaluation is at the heart of teacher improvement. The reality that the teacher in Catholic education is crucial to the ultimate goal spurs us on. Classroom observation, follow-up conferencing, and professional improvement plans help insure that teachers move along the continuum of excellence in the school community. Quality education in the Catholic school is the only goal worthy of our efforts.

When it seems apparent to the principal and teacher that serious difficulties in the instructional process are present, a plan of action that is mutually acceptable must be developed. Such planning is at the center of improving teacher effectiveness. The principal demonstrated a willingness to provide resources, more frequent supervision, and appropriate follow-up conferences. (The work of Madeline Hunter has been invaluable in focusing on the instructional process and naming the areas of concern.)

The openness of the teacher to accept and interact with planning for improvement is the common denominator for success. At the heart of effective supervision and conferencing is the interactive concern of the principal and the teacher. Learning to teach and improving teaching is the greatest gift we can give to the students.

If a contract is terminated in the middle of the school year,

it requires just cause and due process. A dilemma occurs when the teacher begins to resist and becomes defensive during the implementation of a mutually acceptable instructional improvement plan. When the climate fills with static, children become disruptive, parents complain, and instruction deteriorates, the principal and teacher must arrive at a conclusion. If the end result of the evaluation conferences reveals a pattern of difficulty, guidance and advice to terminate the contract are necessary. The distinctive feature of this termination process is the *way* it is done. Systematic evaluation should bring the teacher to self-awareness. However, if a mutual decision is not reached, justice demands that the welfare of the students be considered first. Schools are for students. Those significant adults privileged to service the children must be relentless in the pursuit of a quality Catholic education. The importance of conferencing and written communication cannot be stressed enough. If it is necessary to terminate a teacher in the school year, the matter is usually shared with the diocesan superintendent's office prior to dismissal. "The decision to terminate the services of the teacher is the sole prerogative of the school. The principal should act in consultation with the pastor on these matters. The School Board should be notified of the action."[69] These difficult actions demand openness, just cause, due process, and a respect for the dignity of person as they are implemented in the human community of the school.

Salary Concerns

It would be remiss in the discussion of personnel practices not to surface the dimension of salary. Newspapers and current periodicals have carried the message that teachers are underpaid for their professional services. In the Gallup Polls from 1969 to 1984,[70] it is cited that the American public tends to feel that teachers' salaries are too low. It is interesting to note in areas of shortage, that growing support is present for paying math and science teachers more. Most recently the issue of merit pay has caused great controversy. There is no doubt that the controversy will

continue.

The relevance of the salary issue in the context of the Catholic school teacher is clear. Although pastoral letters call lay teachers and religious to a sense of vocation to the ministry, they also cite the importance of a just wage.

> "...people must receive an adequate salary guaranteed by a well-defined contract, for the work they do in schools: a salary that will permit them to live in dignity, without excessive work or a need for additional employment that will interfere with the duties of an educator."[71]

The message is clear. The political movement on the national level supports the urgency of this salary issue. This writer is convinced that if the Catholic community had salaries that were competitive, there would be no difficulty in attracting teachers. Adequate salaries for all teachers in the Catholic school—lay and religious—would energize the educational ministry.

McBride states that "putting schools on a sound financial basis is one of the major challenges facing the Catholic school ministry of the 80's."[72] The challenge is a "sign of the times." An opportunity to meet the challenge will require new energies and risks. Broader involvement of the Catholic community—bishops, priests, religious, and the laity—is important. The areas of endowments, government aid, and development are fertile soil for supporting a study of the strategies needed to secure sound fiscal planning.

CONCLUSION

As Catholic educators, it is more and more evident that we hold a sacred trust, trust that has been handed on to us by those dedicated and committed pioneers who founded the Catholic school system in the United States. Our heritage is rich and serves as a road map for the future challenges educators face in the decade ahead. The role of the teacher in the Catholic school is one of trust, reverence, and promise. Frost reminds us, "But we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep."

SUMMARY

1. The role of the teacher in the Catholic school is one of trust, reverence, and promise. "Let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends on them almost entirely for the acccomplishments of its goals and purposes" (Gravissimum Educationis #8).
2. The 80's is a "time between eras" (Naisbitt). The teacher formation thrust of the 80's promises a deepened spiritual dimension and church-centered emphasis to both preservice and inservice education.
3. Schools are people. Catholic schools must seek to engage the services of loving and committed people. Such service is the heartbeat of faith that energizes the teachers.
4. The term, "ministry," heightens the focus of the nature of commitment to education. "The basics of ministry are to make visible to others that presence of God in your life" (Nouwen). The entire ministry of the teacher must be seen in the context of faith.
5. Teaching is the process of communicating with enthusiasm, a love of life, a love of learning, a love of the disciplines we teach, a love for the promise found in those we teach.
6. The teacher must recognize and respect the primary roles of parents in the education of their children. However, the teacher must be alert to create a climate of mutual trust and support in order that parents will feel a spirit of Christian hospitality when they approach the school for help.
7. It is evident that the relationship between teacher and student is one of sacred trust. The teacher views students "with a reverence characterized by compassion and high expectations" (Nouwen).

8. The characteristic of enthusiasm is hard to measure yet when it is absent, most observable. Effective teachers who possess this quality are alert to the potential of each moment that presents itself in the teaching/learning process. The teacher's professional competence, personal and relational qualities, and faith qualities are experienced by the students as an integration of learning and loving.
9. The Catholic educator has a constant need for updating: in personal attitudes; in the content of subjects taught; in the pedagogical methods that are used. Recall that the vocation of educator requires a constant readiness to begin anew and adapt (Lay Catholics in Schools, #27). The scope of renewal and growth is at once individually and communally oriented.
10. Witness is the basis of Christian ministry (Nouwen). The teacher is a very visible witness to the school community on a daily basis. This is what makes the responsibility of teacher in the Catholic school so awesome.
11. Classroom management has three guideposts for organization:
    - Is there anything in my classroom that violates dignity of person;
    - Is there anything in my classroom that violates the uniqueness of the student as person and learner;
    - Is there anything in my classroom that diminishes my belief in the future power of these students.
12. In the 70's and 80's, a new model for staffing evolved and was nourished by papal documents. The increased role of the laity became the "sign of the times." This era calls for collaboration between religious and laity with development and commitment to participative leadership.
13. Catholic colleges and universities possess unique resources to assist the Catholic school teachers in combining professional preparation with the spiritual and ministerial dimensions of teacher preparation. Bishops can provide the leadership in "calling" colleges and universities to enter into a collaborative model of teacher preparation.

14. To contrast one's professional, spiritual and ministerial gifts for the service of the "People of God" is rarely communicated with the word "hire." The process of preparing to sign a contract is risk with promise. There is no more important duty for the administrator than identifying and employing the right teacher.
15. Pastoral letters call lay teachers and religious to a sense of vocation to the ministry as well as citing the importance of an "adequate salary" (Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith).

FOOTNOTES

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10. Gravissimum Educationis, *op.cit.*
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14. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
15. Wojcicki and Convey, *op.cit.*, p. 1.
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23. Nouwen, "A Quality of Heart," p. 3.
24. Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller, *Teachers, Their World, and Their Work* (Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1984), pp. 109-139.
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26. Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin, *A Model of Educational Change: Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change*, Volume 1 (Santa Monica, Cal.: Rand Corporation, 1974).
27. Thomas Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision* (San Francisco, Cal.: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 271.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
29. Groome, *op.cit.*, p. 270.
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31. Elaine Delaney, Jane E. Richards, and Marlene I. Strathe. "A Study of the Single Parent Child in the Catholic School," *Momentum*. 15 (December, 1984), pp. 41-43.
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33. Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education. "Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith," *Origins*. XII (December 30, 1982), pp. 458-469, #29.
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Suggested Readings

Clements Zachary. *Sense and Humanity in Our Schools*. Morristown, N.J.: Silver Burdett, 1981. A simple, direct, common sense analysis of the teaching/learning process in the school setting. Excellent tool for self-evaluation by the classroom teacher.

Fisher, Edward. *Everybody Steals from God*. South Bend, Ind.: Notre Dame Press, 1977. An invaluable text for reflection on a holistic approach to education and life.

Groome, Thomas H. *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980. An excellent source book for faculty reflection on the integration of theory and practice in Christian religious education. Chapter 12 may form the context for a faculty retreat day.

Lieberman, Ann and Miller, Lynne. *Teachers, Their World, and Their Work*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1984. A fingertip analysis of the latest research in teaching, blended with in-the-field examples.

Maida, Adam, editor. *Issues in the Labor Management Dialogue: Church Perspectives*. St. Louis, Mo.: Catholic Health Association, 1982. Excellent analysis of the work-related issues of service professions. Special attention given to the role of unions and collective bargaining in religious institutions. Although the focus is health service, the transferability of principles is clear.

McBride, Rev. Alfred. *Interviewing and Supporting the Catholic Educator*. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1983 and *The Christian Formation of Catholic Educators*. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1980. These two CACE monographs are already classics in the field and are recommended with enthusiasm to teachers, chairpersons, and administrators.

National Catholic Educational Association. *The Pre-Service Formation of Teachers for Catholic Schools*. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1982. The title of this monograph may lead the inservice teacher to bypass it. The items are worthy of examination and reflection by all teachers. However, these qualities that are listed in the document should be of special interest to the preservice teacher and teacher education.

National Catholic Educational Association. *Code of Ethics for the Catholic School Teacher*. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1982. A well-developed code of ethics, stated in the form of commitments to the students, parents, community, and profession. Available from NCEA publications, $1.50 per copy. A fine guide for both new and experienced teachers.

Nouwen, Henri. *Creative Ministry*. New York: Doubleday, 1971. This book contains new yeast for the reader each time it is re-read. Special emphasis is recommended for Chapter I, where the reader is caused to

review a redemptive way of learning.

Peters, Thomas J. and Waterman, Robert H. *In Search of Excellence*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982. This book of lessons from America's best-run companies are worth reading with the eye of the teacher on the dynamics of the best-run schools. Special attention is recommended for the section of the text entitled, "Back to Basics."

Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education. *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*. Origins. XII(1982), pp. 458-469. This church document is suggested for first reading or re-reading by all teachers in the Catholic school community. The idea of teaching as personal calling is profound. The section on "adequate salary" should form the context for fiscal planning in our schools.

Wojcicki, Father Ted and Convey, Brother Kevin. *Teachers, Catholic Schools, and Faith Community*. Le Jacq Publishing Company, 1982. A practitioner's program of spirituality. The perspective of teacher and administrator are blended in this well-designed inservice program. The questions, presented as context for the program are reality based and the responses will be valuable for teachers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS BOOKLET

The contents of this booklet reflect the privilege and responsibilities of the task of teaching in a Catholic school. It is well worth reflection and study time, especially by total faculties, since it provides both inspirational and practical aspects.

EXTENDED FORMATS

OPTION A:

For five or more sessions—Participants are asked to read the booklet ahead of time. Some of the sessions need advance preparation.

Session 1: Focus on the faith qualities and competencies necessary for a teacher in the Catholic school.

- as individuals, have participants reflect on the question, "How can I nourish a faith-filled vision that is so necessary for the ministry of education?"
- share in small groups
- as a total group, have participants list verification/implications of the following paragraph:

  "Schools are people. Catholic schools must seek to engage the services of loving and committed people. Such service is the heartbeat of the faith life that energizes the teachers" (p. 3).

Session 2: Focus on personal and relational qualities and competencies of a teacher in a Catholic school.

A teacher has many important relationships to establish and nourish. In view of this, discuss the following:

- What are some specific things a teacher can do to build each of these different relationships?

- How does a teacher maintain these relationships?
- How can teachers balance the variety of relationships?

As a closing activity, have the participants compose a quote or slogan that describes each relationship.

Sessions 3 and 4: Focus on professional qualities and competencies of a teacher in the Catholic school.

- Discuss the qualities of the educated person as they apply to a teacher in the Catholic school (p. 17). Cite examples of how each of these qualities is lived out in the daily life of a teacher. What are the implications if each staff member in a Catholic school is this type of educated person?
- Invite a teaher who instills enthusiasm for teaching and content to speak briefly to the group on his/her ministry.
- Discuss in small groups the questions on p. 22 regarding classroom management. Share your insights with the total group.
- Discuss "What is distinctive about personnel policies and practices in a Catholic school?"
- "Witness is the basis of Christian ministry" (p. 31). Have teachers choose a given day. Think of all the ways their co-workers have been a witness to them. Share with the total group. Each participant think of ways he/she has been witness to all co-workers. Share in small groups.
- Discuss in small groups the cognitive abilities and facilitation skills as listed on pp. 17-19. Which areas are you/your staff in need of more assistance. Draw up a plan for improvement in one chosen area (from this list or any other area), using the principles listed on p. 28.

Session 5: Use this session to celebrate "Catholic School Teachers: Professionals with Promises to Keep" (e.g., paraliturgy or liturgy and social).

OPTION B:

For two or three sessions. Use a variety of activities from the **Mix and Match** section below to comprise several sessions.

MIX AND MATCH

Read booklet ahead of time.

Step 1. Prayer

Step 2. Openings—Choose one of the following:

a. Brainstrom the qualities of a Catholic school teacher as you perceive them. List them under the categories of: faith, personal/relational and professional. Discuss the overlap and inter-relatedness of the categories.

b. Have each participant phrase their personal definition of teaching. Share definitions in small groups discussing commonalities and differences in emphases.

c. "But we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep." Generate a list of promises Catholic school teachers commit themselves to keep.

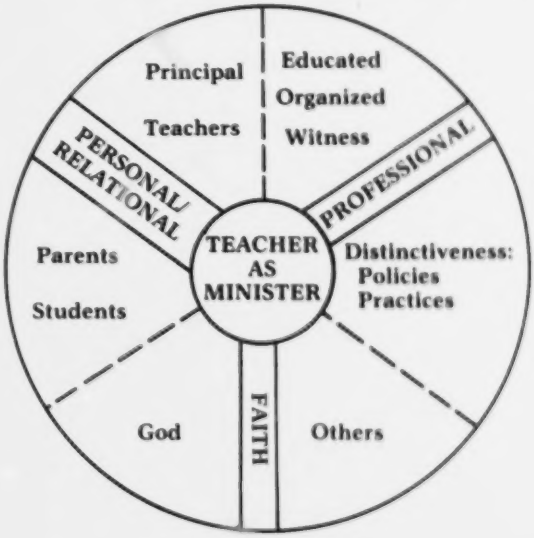
d. Display the following diagram. Have participants share their interpretation of it supporting each aspect with specifics.

e. Before the session, survey students on what they expect of a Catholic school teacher. Share the results of this survey with the participants.

Step 3. Middles—Choose from among the following:

a. Invite a panel to speak on the role of the teacher in the Catholic school. The panel could be composed of teacher, student, parent, administrator, clergy, board member.

b. Present the following diagram to the participants. Ask them to work in small groups to fill in more descriptive words under each heading. One person from each group should be prepared to make a summary statement to the large group.



c. Reread the definition of teaching on p. 9. In small groups, list indicators of each phrase as it applies to a Catholic school teacher. Post your list for the group and be prepared to respond to questions from the group.

d. Have participants list the five qualities they perceive as the most important for a Catholic school teacher and two indicators of each quali-

ty in daily school life. Each participant should be ready to present/discuss/defend their choice of qualities.

e. Focus on one (or more) of the following sections:
   - Faith qualities/competencies—beginning p. 5.
   - Personal-relational qualities/competencies—beginning p. 9.
   - Professional qualities/competencies—beginning p. 17.

   Assign someone beforehand to give a brief summary of the section.

   Discuss:
   - What does this mean for me as a Catholic school teacher?
   - How can we grow in this area?
   - How can we be support to each other in this area?

f. Ask participants to choose one section to present to the group and to provide one interactive question for the group for that section.

Step 4. Endings—Choose one of the following:

a. Have each participant write a summary paragraph entitled, "My Promises to Keep as a Catholic School Teacher." Share with one other person in the group.

b. "Let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends on them almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and purposes" (GE, #8). Have participants cite support/examples of this statement.

c. "The teacher's professional competence, personal and relational qualities and faith qualities are experienced by the students as an integration of learning and living" (p. 21). Think of one of your teachers who was an example of this. Reflect on how you might imitate one aspect of that person's integration.

d. Individually, reflect on two differences you want the study of this booklet to make in your ministry. Share these with one other person.

e. In pairs, share with each other your responses to:
I learned that...
I was surprised that...
I feel...

Step 5. Closing Prayer.

PLANNED FORMAT—SINGLE SESSION

Minutes		
	Step 1:	Participants read the text in advance of the session
2	Step 2:	Opening prayer Scripture: 2 Tim. 1:11 and John 10:10, followed by a brief period of silence.
5	Step 3:	In small groups, share responses to I was impressed by.....
30	Step 4:	A panel (participants or guests) prepares a presentation on the qualities and competencies of a Catholic school teacher focusing on faith, personal-relational and professional aspects.
10	Step 5:	Questions/interaction between panel and participants.
10	Step 6:	In pairs, list key words related to this topic. Post yours for all to see.
3	Step 7:	Closing prayer Matthew 28: 19-20, followed by a brief silence, then the *Our Father*.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Step 1: Think of the teacher who influenced the quality of your life the most. List the qualities that teacher possessed.

Step 2: As you read the text, list specific qualities/competencies beneath each of the following headings:
Faith
Personal-Relational

Professional

Step 3: After reading, add any other specific qualities you think it would be good for a Catholic school teacher to possess.

Step 4: Reflect on the privilege and awesomeness of the task of teaching in a Catholic school.

Step 5: Read Daniel 12:3 and respond with prayer in your own words.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sister Francis Raftery is a professor of Education and has chaired the Department of Education at College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, N.J. since 1971. Raftery, who has taught at the elementary and secondary levels, chaired a two-year intensive program of inservice education for elementary school teachers and has directed summer institutes of study for teachers in the areas of individualization of instruction and reading. She has directed institutes and workshops for inservice purposes in both public and nonpublic schools, and has prepared programs for parent education.

Raftery has published several papers and spoken to a number of groups on such topics as inservice education, classroom management and parent education.

A past president of the New Jersey Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Raftery serves on several advisory councils for the New Jersey State Department of Education.

NCEA KEYNOTE SERIES

1. *Distinctive Qualities of the Catholic School*
   Father Edwin J. McDermott, S.J.
2. *A History of Catholic Schooling in the United States*
   Father Harold A. Buetow
3. *Development and Public Relations for the Catholic School*
   Jerry A. Jarc
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7. *The Parent, the Parish, and the Catholic School*
   Dr. Ed Weisse
8. *The Teacher in the Catholic School*
   Sister Francis Raftery, S.C.
9. *Curriculum in the Catholic School*
   Brother Robert J. Kealey, F.S.C.
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    Father James F. Hawker
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TITLES IN PREPARATION

Total Development of the Student in the Catholic School
Methods of Teaching in the Catholic School
Research and the Catholic School

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